



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Teton  
National Park

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## Grand Teton National Park News Release

### WINTER VEHICLE STORAGE AREA FLOODS

Due to recent warm temperatures and quick snow melt, unprecedented flooding was discovered Friday morning, March 14, at an outdoor area used by Grand Teton National Park as winter storage for vehicles and temporary structures. The flooded area, known as the Blacktail storage site, is an old borrow pit created in 1963 during road construction on Highway 89/191. The park and various highway construction companies have used the five-acre depression for over 30 years without flooding. Park personnel, who were at the storage area on Tuesday evening, March 11, observed no signs or indications of flooding.

Approximately 45 park vehicles were affected by the floodwater. A mix of new and old vehicles, three trailer houses, some small buildings and miscellaneous building materials was stored at this location, which also serves as a practice shooting range for area law enforcement personnel during summer months.

Park officials notified the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and a DEQ representative surveyed the site on Sunday. A Maxim Technologies, Inc. environmental scientist collected water samples on Sunday as well. No significant gas or oil leaks were noted and several of the stored vehicles contain sealed fuel systems, which prevent leakage. Following established hazardous materials procedures, booms were installed around the flooded area to contain possible pollution and blotters were used to absorb any floating contaminants.

Throughout Friday, melt water continued to flow into the area from an arroyo at the north end of the storage site. A gully draining the accelerated snowmelt was significantly enlarged and eroded due to the substantial runoff. After surveying the bench area above the storage site, park staff determined that an apparent flash flood of snowmelt occurred due to unprecedented warm temperatures causing a quick snowpack thaw over still frozen ground. Floodwaters have dropped by one foot since Sunday afternoon.

Park staff worked throughout the weekend salvaging materials and vehicles from the storage area.

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